

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus, comprising:
- 5 a pouch comprising a first end, a second end, and a pouch length extending therebetween, wherein the pouch further defines an interior; and
- a moisture-sensitive product having a continuous length, the product being folded into a packaged configuration comprising a plurality of sections arranged within the interior and along the pouch length, each section comprising
- 10 at least two folds and a segment spanning therebetween, the segment also extending along the pouch length.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the pouch further comprises an opening proximate the first end, the opening permitting access to the interior of
- 15 the pouch.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a container adapted to receive the pouch therein.
4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the product comprises moisture-curable orthopedic splinting/casting product.
- 20 5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least two of the sections are generally identical.
- 25 6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the pouch comprises at least one sheet of moisture-impervious material.
7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the continuous length product has a
- 30 length at least two times the pouch length.
8. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a compression device proximate the opening.

9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the compression device is located on an exterior of the pouch.

5 10. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the compression device comprises two opposing and compressible members biased towards one another.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein each compression member comprises a foam pad.

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12. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the compression device is adapted to substantially conform the shape of the pouch to the shape of the product.

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13. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a sealing device proximate the opening.

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14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the pouch comprises a pouch width measured transversely to the pouch length, wherein the pouch width is substantially constant along the pouch length.

15. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least two sections each comprise only two folds and one segment therebetween.

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16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the at least two sections each form an S-shape.

17. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least two sections each comprise three segments, each of the segments being bounded at both ends by folds.

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18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein at least two of the three segments are substantially equal in length.

19. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein each of the three segments are substantially equal in length.

5 20. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein each section comprises at least four folds.

21. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the at least two sections each form a mushroom-shape.

10 22. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a suspension member.

23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the suspension member is located proximate the second end.

15 24. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the pouch further comprises a pocket within the interior, the pocket adapted to partially surround the product.

25. An apparatus for storing and dispensing a continuous length of product, the apparatus comprising:

20 a pouch comprising an interior for receiving and storing a continuous length of moisture-sensitive product, wherein the pouch further comprises a first end; and

a compression device adapted to couple to the pouch proximate the first end, the compression device comprising a first compression member and a
25 second, opposing compression member, the compression members adapted to substantially conform the shape of the first end of the pouch to the shape of the product.

30 26. The apparatus of claim 25, further comprising an opening proximate the first end, the opening permitting access to the product within the interior of the pouch.

27. The apparatus of claim 26, further comprising a sealing device adapted to substantially seal the opening.

5 28. The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the sealing device forms a parallel closure device.

10 29. The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the parallel closure device comprises a male member and a female member, the female member adapted to receive the male member such that the pouch is trapped therebetween.

30. The apparatus of claim 25, further comprising a suspension member coupled to the pouch.

15 31. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the suspension member is located proximate a second end of the pouch.

20 32. The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the compression members conform the shape of the first end of the pouch to the shape of the product as the product is dispensed from the pouch through the opening.

33. The apparatus of claim 25, further comprising a container substantially enclosing the pouch, the container comprising an aperture through which the first end of the pouch protrudes.

25 34. The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the compression device is coupled to the container.

30 35. The apparatus of claim 33, further comprising a sealing device adapted to substantially seal an opening in the pouch proximate the first end, wherein the sealing device is coupled to the container.

36. The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the sealing device comprises a guillotine.

37. The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the guillotine comprises a slide member that selectively pinches the pouch proximate the first end against a clamping surface.

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38. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the moisture-sensitive product comprises a moisture-curable product.

39. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the moisture-sensitive product comprises a moisture-curable splinting/casting product.

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40. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the first and second compression members are biased towards one another and further wherein at least one of the compression members is compressible.

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41. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the pouch is elongated, and further wherein the compression device is selectively movable along a length of the elongated pouch.

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42. A closure apparatus for use with products stored within a flexible pouch, the apparatus comprising:

a compression device comprising two opposing compression members;

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a sealing device operatively coupled to the compression device, the sealing device comprising opposing sealing members wherein the sealing members are selectively movable between an open position and a closed position.

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43. The closure apparatus of claim 42, further comprising a frame assembly operatively coupling the compression device to the sealing device.

44. The closure apparatus of claim 42, further comprising a pouch containing a product, wherein the pouch has a first end with an opening therein, the closure apparatus securable to the pouch proximate the first end.

45. The closure apparatus of claim 44, wherein the compression members are adapted to substantially conform the shape of the pouch to the shape of the product.

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46. The closure apparatus of claim 44, wherein the sealing device is adapted to selectively seal the opening of the pouch.

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47. A method for packaging a continuous length of product in a pouch, the method comprising:

providing a continuous length of moisture-sensitive product;

folding the product into a packaged configuration, the packaged configuration comprising a plurality of interconnected sections, where at least one section comprises at least two folds and a segment spanning therebetween; and

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enclosing the plurality of sections within a pouch, the pouch comprising a first end, a second end, and a pouch length extending therebetween, wherein the segment extends along the pouch length.

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48. The method of claim 47, further comprising repeating the formation of the sections substantially over the pouch length.

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49. The method of claim 47, wherein the product comprises moisture-curable orthopedic splinting/casting product.

50. The method of claim 47, further comprising creating an opening in the pouch proximate the first end.

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51. The method of claim 50, further comprising providing a compression device proximate the opening.

52. The method of claim 50, further comprising providing a sealing device proximate the opening.

53. The method of claim 47, wherein at least two of the sections are generally identical and comprise only two folds and one segment.

5 54. The method of claim 47, wherein at least two of the sections are generally identical and comprise at least four folds and three segments.

55. The method of claim 54, wherein at least two of the three segments are substantially equal in length.

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52 53 56. A method for dispensing a product from a flexible pouch, the method comprising:

providing a pouch containing a flexible product, the pouch having a first end;

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coupling a closure apparatus to the pouch proximate the first end, the closure apparatus comprising:

a compression device comprising two opposing compression members; and

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a sealing device comprising opposing sealing members wherein the sealing members are selectively movable between an open position and a closed position;

positioning the sealing device in the open position;

creating a first opening proximate the first end of the pouch to provide access to the product therein;

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dispensing product from the pouch through the first opening, wherein the compression members substantially conform the shape of the pouch to the shape of the product.

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57. The method of claim 56, wherein the sealing device is coupled to the compression device.

5 59. The method of claim 58, further comprising pushing the product remaining in the pouch back into the first opening prior to moving the sealing device to the closed position.

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